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that I take them to be Americanisms, though these words of mine, which he had before him, but to which he chose to shut his eyes, by plain construction contradict his averment: "*Help finish* instead of *help to finish*, be it as it may elsewhere, is, in this country exclusively confined to the discourse of plebeians. And not a shade more reputable, here in Great Britain, and barely more endurable than *does not be*, etc., and *does not have*, *did not have*, etc., though their pretensions to respectability are observably different in the United States." "I *did not have* them" is met with even in Cardinal Newman, to be sure; but for all that, its proletarianism is beyond denial.

The aim of Mr. Williams is to lay at my door that for which, if he made good his contention, I should justly be an object of contemptuous derision. On his faith, I have been duped by conceit into imagining myself able to point out the discrepancies of the English of America from that of England, and yet have still to acquire the very elements of the information essential for such an undertaking. After expending page after page, with intent to fasten on me the imputation of crass ignorance and utter incompetence as a philologist, he thinks fit to say, however, that my "knowledge of the differences between British [English] and American English is incomparably greater than that of anybody else." Inconsistency he would, I suppose, disavow; and I have no disposition to tax him with it. He is, of course, ironical. Let it be hoped that practice will by and by impart to his essays in irony a higher finish and a keener edge than have hitherto distinguished them.

Should any curious person impartially go through my "American Dialect" and Mr. William's "Not so very American," I am entirely confident of his conclusion. It would be summarily, that my critic's citations, from English books, of passages parallel to those which I have given from Mr. Eggleston, in no way whatever affect my argument; that he has not detected me in a single error; and that his indictment of me for fatuity recoils on himself.

FITZEDWARD HALL.

Marlesford, England.

PARLER FRANÇAIS COMME UNE VACHE ESPAGNOLE.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES.

SIRS:—It seems to be generally understood that in the familiar "*parler français comme une vache espagnole*," *vache* stands for *Basque* by popular etymology. The addition of the adjective seeming strange, Littré (s.v. *vache*) tries to explain: "*Comme il y a des Basques en Espagne et d'autres en France, on a dit d'abord: Parler français comme un Basque espagnol ou comme une Basque espagnole.*" Even if we have to see *Basque* in *vache*, I do not think that the adjective was originally the attribute of the subst., but that we have to understand the phrase as follows: "*Il parle français comme un Basque (parle) espagnol.*" We here have a comparison between two different languages, the same we have in the interpretation of this proverbial saying, I would prefer. Though Fass as well as Andresen follow Littré, I believe *vache* was not introduced into it by "*une corruption.*" The phrase might originally have run like this: "*Il parle français comme une vache espagnol,*" that is to say, "*espagnol*" was originally the object of a verb *parle*, just as *français* is of *parle*. Later on, this was misunderstood, it seemed to be the attribute of *vache*, and the *e* as sign of the feminine of the adjective, was added. For the word *espagnol* in this phrase, compare the use of *spanisch* in many German expressions; as, "*es kommt mir etwas spanisch vor; es klingt einem etwas spanisch; es wird einem spanisch im Kopfe*" (Sanders). That the cow is often cited in proverbs and proverbial sayings, a glance at one of the dictionaries of proverbs shows. Grimm (p. 2548) gives "*so viel verstehn von etwas als die Kuh vom Kalender*," Wander in his rich collection (s.v. *Kuh*, 601) has: "*Man würde eher einer Kuh spinnen lehren.*" But more than all this the following quotations must interest us, as they seem to contain a translation of the original French saying and to be decisive evidence of the explanation I have given. Wander I, 1103 has; "*He sprekt fransch wie de Kuh spansch,*" as spoken at Meurs, quite corresponding to "*Hä sprich frânsch wie de Koh spânsch,*" quoted from a letter by Andresen, note on p. 49. In Dutch we see the same phrase, compare Wander I, 1103: "*Hij kent Fransch als eene Koe Spaansch.*" On page 741 of the fourth volume, he gives it in Modern High German, though a little different: "*Er spricht davon französisch wie eine Kuh spanisch.*"

E. LESER.

Cambridge, Mass.